

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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## Editorial

### Growing Old

(Comfort for the Aged.)

Few like to admit it, even to themselves. The past years stretch away in an ever lengthened line, and often they have left a sorrowful record. There have been so many mistakes, so many unrealized hopes, so little to be proud of; yet we regret "the days that are no more." We think of the friends who walked with us a part of the way. One fell out here, another there. One by one the old ties have been broken. One by one the company of our old friends has been thinned out, and there are only a few left, only a few who shared with us the joyous days of the olden time, when life was young, and the skies were roseate with hope. We look in the glass and see the grey hairs, and we think of the friends and loved ones passed away. A feeling of weariness and loneliness comes into the heart, a sigh escapes the lips,—we are growing old.

Nay, we are growing young. Grey hairs and feeble limbs mean nothing in the light of the immortality of youth which awaits the redeemed. The River of Life is the fountain of eternal youth. There will none grow old in heaven. The pathos of this earthly pilgrimage will not dim the perfect glory of the golden streets. Think of the land where there will be no sorrowing farewells spoken, no hearts broken, no scalding tears, no declining years. Who minds the crumbling of this earthly tabernacle when there awaits him the "house not built with hands, eternal in the heavens?" The old are not all to be pitied, but rather envied. They are nearly done the troublesome pilgrimage. They will not have to travel that thorny, perilous road again. They will not have to repeat its mistakes, or its heart-aches. They are very, very near the threshold of eternal youth. The gates of pearl will soon welcome them. The going home is near, even at the doors. And with the old, going home is going to the loved ones, even as it was in the days gone by. Blessed are the aged. How beautiful it must be to stand in the dawning light of the New Jerusalem, and find in the heart that the grace of Jesus has taken away all fear, and made us long with sweet impatience for the chariot of God.

### A Slice of Responsibility

Every atom of power of any kind represents just so much responsibility. Our brain power, whether in larger or lesser degree, which may be exerted for evil or good, our moral power, or the influence either beneficent or pernicious which we exert upon the character and conduct of others,

the possession of wealth, which enlarges the range of our personal force and the opportunities for its exercise, all these suggest a weight of responsibility which appals the serious mind. Upon the part of Christians this responsibility is increased by the distinct undertaking to advance the cause of righteousness. If you contract to do a certain thing, that engagement argues a much more specific and direct responsibility than merely your *fitness* to do that work. You engage your honor, your integrity; and if you are acting in any sort as the agent of another, your responsibility is increased by all the sanctions of his character and honor. If these are true considerations, if this is an accurate estimate of our personal responsibility, how can a Christian waste, or put to a bad use, or employ for selfish ends, either time or property? How can he waste his opportunities, or how neglect to press with all his faculties into every avenue of usefulness?

If personal responsibility can be classified preferentially, we would say that Christians are responsible: first, for the moral influence exerted in their families; secondly, in the church to which they belong; thirdly, in the community in which they live; and fourthly, upon society in general. In all these important spheres they are bound by every law of truth and honor, by every claim which God's love and mercy has upon them, and by every hope of the divine approval at the last day, to withstand and combat to the uttermost every agency and influence of evil. If this standard of practical righteousness was lived up to by all church members, there would be no saloons, no gambling dens, no garbage newspapers, less poverty, less suffering, less Sabbath breaking, less war. The church would soon become so mighty, so aggressive, so effectually armed and equipped with all the agencies of extension, that the powers of darkness would be compelled to retire in defeat and confusion. What a different face would be put upon all the work of the church if our educational, publishing and missionary boards had all the material support which would flow to them were every member discharging the full measure of his responsibility.

It would be an interesting table of statistics to have before our eyes, with mathematical exactness, the percentage of Christian professors who are living up to the standard of their duty. There is only one instance in history where this particular class of information was tabulated in mathematical terms. In a numerous community there were not fifty righteous; nor forty; nor thirty; nor twenty; nor ten? Suppose the same test were applied to our churches. In that membership of one hundred, are there fifty who are discharging their whole duty, living up to the full measure of their responsibility? Are there forty? or thirty? or